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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NATO](#) [AF](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [EZ](#) [EUN](#)
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON EVE OF CZECH PRT DEPLOYMENT TO LOGAR,
AFGHANISTAN

REF: PRAGUE 17

Classified By: POLEC Counselor Michael Dodman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (SBU) Summary: On February 11, the Czechs will send the first of their troops to establish a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Logar, Afghanistan. With the exception of a few remaining issues (see paragraph 4), the Czech PRT continues to be on track for a successful deployment by mid-March. End Summary.

Deployment Commences February 11

12. (C) The first contingent of the Czech Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) is set to deploy to Bagram airbase on February 11, 2008, aboard a Czech Air Force Airbus. The Czech soldiers (39 in all) will then travel onward to the newly constructed home of the Czech PRT on a U.S.-Czech Forward Operating Base (FOB SHANK) located in the Logar Province's capital of Pol-e Alam. The flight on February 11 is the first of four that will transport the Czech PRT's 190 military, and 10 civilian personnel with subsequent flights February 19, March 6 and March 14. The Czech PRT's equipment is set to be transported aboard six U.S. contracted AN-124 airplanes arriving at Kabul International Airport between February 24 and March 5. Additionally, two C-17 flights will transport the Czech PRT's ammunition. This plan should allow the Czech PRT to successfully be in place with all its equipment by the planned Initial Operational Capability (IOC) date of March 21, 2008.

Preparations on Track

13. (C) In advance of the PRT's deployment on February 11, Czech advance teams, working in close cooperation with Regional Command-East (RC-E), have been in Afghanistan preparing for the PRT troops' arrival. Following the establishment of the four person National Support Element (NSE) co-located with the Czech Military Field Hospital at Kabul International Airport (KIAI) in December, the Czechs sent a ten person communication team in mid-January to establish communications at the Czech PRT's new Tactical Operations Center (TOC). In late January several of the civilian team members met to discuss reconstruction opportunities with USDA official Ramiro Rojas, who came to Prague at the invitation of the Czech government and Embassy Prague following his just completed tour at PRT Gardez. A Czech civilian reconstruction team recently visited RC-E, FOB SHANK, and various organizations in Kabul to set the stage for the PRT's assumption of ongoing projects in the Logar region. Additionally, a Czech ordinance team has been working along side RC-E and Army Material Command (AMC)

experts at Bagram airbase to prepare twenty newly arrived (and U.S. provided) M1114 Up-armored humvees for issue to the Czech troops. This work has included the modification of the humvee turrets to permit the Czech crews to mount machine guns and grenade launchers as well as install U.S.-provided IED-jammers. These humvees should be ready for delivery on schedule to FOB SHANK. Also in the works: select personnel will attend ISAF PRT training in Oberammergau, Germany and by the end of February, the Czech MFA plans to offer a course specifically for the civilian team covering project management, and media training.

Minor Outstanding Issues

¶4. (C) Only a few relatively minor issues remain unresolved - such as an open Czech request for tactical radios and the need to decide who will pay for FOB SHANK construction costs. All-in-all though, the Czech troops deployment to PRT Logar looks set for a successful start on March 21, 2008.

¶5. (C) Comment: Czech press has started to run an increasing number of stories referencing the PRT, thus far mostly of an informational nature and containing little negative commentary. This could change, however, given the increased debate across Europe over NATO's performance leading ISAF. Nonetheless, the GOCR attention to detail in preparation for this deployment to Logar, as well as the experienced leadership on both the civilian and military sides of the PRT command, should serve them well once they take command of this PRT.

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